

# The **A**merican Magazine

25 Cents

March

**Will  
Durant**

"My Stock Market  
Operations"  
By H.I. Phillips

Bruce Barton

+

A New  
Scattergood  
Story

By Clarence  
Budington  
Kelland

+

Mary B. Mullett

Ross Santee



By William  
Dudley  
Pelley —

**My Seven Minutes  
in Eternity**

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# The American Magazine

Vol. CVII Contents for March 1929 No. 3

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LET your eyes drift over to the table of contents. An alluring menu! But it contains two titles which seem to clash.

"I Haven't Cluttered My Head with Things Not in My Line," announces Andrew Maloney, president of a great coal company. And, a little farther down, "Miller Has Always Minded the Other Fellow's Business." Henry Miller, by the way, is a master of railroading.

How come? . . . One man achieved fame and fortune by sticking strictly to his own affairs; the other paid a lot of attention to the jobs held by his fellow workers. From which example can we profit?

From both of them. The inconsistency is only apparent.

Andrew Maloney made up his mind to know all there was to be known about coal. He read, thought, and lived coal, eventually becoming a titan in his field.

And what was Henry Miller doing all this time? Dodging from pillar to post? Not at all! He studied railroading, thought railroading, lived railroading. But in that vastly complex field of commerce he set out to master every branch. Today, without ever having been a machinist, he could build a locomotive; he can fire or drive an engine; he can keep books, though he has never been a bookkeeper; and he can trace a waybill without ever having been a freight clerk. Miller followed many roads—but they all led to Rome. Had he been blessed with less curiosity, courage, and common sense he might never have risen from a rut.

Speaking of ruts, the stories of these two men prove one point: A rut is not a job. It's a state of mind.

THE EDITOR.

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March, 1929



# The American Magazine



MORE THAN 2,200,000 CIRCULATION



## Seven Minutes in Eternity— the Amazing Experience that Made Me Over

By WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY



IN THE Sierra Madre Mountains, near Pasadena, California, I own a bungalow. When I want seclusion in order to complete a knotty job of writing, I lay in a stock of provisions, bid adieu to acquaintances, motor up to this hide-away, and work there undisturbed. My only companion is Laska, a tawny police dog.

In the month of April, 1928, I was living in this bungalow while writing a novel. The work had gone well and was nearing completion. I was untroubled mentally, feeling physically fit, writing six to eight hours a day, with plenty of evening recreation.

One night toward the last of the month I returned around ten o'clock and lay reading in bed till midnight. The book had nothing to do, I am convinced, with what subsequently happened. It was a ponderous volume on ethnology, a subject that is something of a hobby with me. I felt drowsy around midnight, laid the volume aside, pulled off my glasses, and extinguished the bed-lamp. I had gone through a similar routine on a hundred other evenings; the day had been no different from a hundred other writing days spent in the bungalow.

My sleeping chamber was located at the back of the house and was perfectly ventilated, with two casement windows opening toward the mountains. Laska curled on the floor at the foot of my bed—her accustomed sleeping place—and that she did not externally motivate the phenomena in any way, I am positive. When it ended, and I was back in my body, I stumbled from

NOT long ago William Dudley Pelley came into the office of THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE, after an absence of more than a year.

"Man, what's happened to you?" asked the editor. "You're looking incredibly better than you did the last time I saw you."

"You've never seen *me* before," replied Mr. Pelley.

"Just what do you mean by that?"

"I mean that the fellow who is standing before you now is a new Bill Pelley—so new that he's only about one year old. I've had an experience. . . ."

On the strength of that conversation Mr. Pelley was asked to write about his great adventure. Neither the editor nor any members of the staff knew what transforming experience the author had been through, but it was evident to all that he had greatly changed, both in appearance and in manner. The accompanying article is the intimate account of his "re-birth." It will surprise and interest you as much as it surprised and interested the staff of THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE. *The Editor.*

the bed and my voice awoke her, bringing her over beside me, where she thumped her tail on the rug and sought to lick my wrist. . . .

I do not recall having any specific dreams the first half of the night, no physical distress, certainly no insomnia. Ordinarily, I do not use liquor and I had none on the premises or in my system on this night in question. For twenty years I had consumed from a dozen to twenty cigars daily and smoked my pipe constantly over the typewriter. But I had never observed any derogatory effects from such indulgence and was no more distressed than usual from this particular day's consumption of nicotine.

BUT between three and four in the morning—the time later verified—a ghastly inner shriek seemed to tear through my somnolent consciousness. In despairing horror I wailed to myself:

*"I'm dying! I'm dying!"*

What told me, I don't know. Some uncanny instinct had been unleashed in slumber to awaken and apprise me. Certainly something was happening to me—something that had never happened down all my days—a physical sensation which I can best describe as a combination of heart attack and apoplexy.

Mind you, I say *physical* sensation. This was not a dream. I was fully awake, and yet I was not. I knew that something had happened either to my heart or head—or both—and that my conscious identity was at the play of forces over which it had no control. I was awake, mind you, and whereas I had been

on a bed in the shadowy dark of a California bungalow when the phenomenon started, the next moment I was plunging down a mystic depth of cool, blue space, with a sinking sensation like that which attends the taking of ether as an anesthetic. Queer noises were singing in my ears. Over and over in a curiously tumbled brain the thought was preëminent:

"So this is death?"

I AVER that in the interval between my seizure and the end of my plunge, I was sufficiently possessed of my physical senses to think: "My dead body may lie in this lonely house for days before anyone discovers it—unless Laska breaks out and brings aid."

Why I should think that, I don't know—or what difference it would have made to me, being the lifeless "remains"—but I remember thinking the thought as distinctly as any thought I ever originated consciously and put on paper in the practice of my vocation.

Next, I was whirling madly. Once in 1920 over San Francisco an airplane in which I was passenger went into a tail spin and we almost fell into the Golden Gate. That feeling! Someone reached out, caught me, stopped me. A calm, clear, friendly voice said, close to my ear:

"Take it easy, old man. Don't be alarmed. You're all right. We're here to help you."

Someone had hold of me, I said—two persons in fact—one with a hand under the back of my neck, supporting my weight, the other with arm run under my knees. I was physically flaccid from my "tumble" and unable to open my eyes as yet because of the sting of queer, opal light that diffused the place into which I had come.

When I finally managed it, I became conscious that I had been borne to a beautiful marble-slab pallet and laid nude upon it by two strong-bodied, kindly-faced young men in white uniforms not unlike those worn by internes in hospitals, who were secretly amused at my confusion and chagrin.

"Feeling better?" the taller of the two asked considerably, as physical strength to sit up unaided came to me and I took note of my surroundings.

"Yes," I stammered. "Where am I?"

They exchanged good-humored glances.

They never answered my question.

They did not need to answer my question. It was superfluous. I knew what had happened. I had left my earthly body on a bungalow bed in the California mountains. I had gone through all the sensations of dying, and whether this was the Hereafter or an intermediate station, most emphatically I had reached a place and state which had never been duplicated in all my experience.

I say this because of the inexpressible ecstasy of my new state, both mental and physical.

For I had carried some sort of body into that new environment with me. I knew that it was nude. It had been capable of feeling the cool, steadying pressure of my friends' hands before my eyes opened. And now that I had reawakened without the slightest distress or harm, I was conscious of a beauty and loveliness of environment that surpasses chronicling on printed paper.

A sort of marble-tiled-and-furnished portico the place was, lighted by that soft, unseen, opal illumination, with a clear-as-crystal Roman pool diagonally across from the bench on which I remained for a time, striving to credit that all this was real. Out beyond the portico everything appeared to exist in a sort of turquoise haze. . . .

I looked from this vista back to the two friends who had received me. There were no other persons anywhere in evidence in the first half of my experience.

Somehow I knew those two men—knew them as intimately as I knew the reflection of my own features in a mirror. And yet something about them, their virility, their physical "glow," their strong and friendly personality sublimated, as it were, kept me from instant identification.

And they knew a good joke about me. They continued to watch me, with a smile in their eyes, when I got down from my marble bench and moved about the portico till I came to the edge of the pool.

"Bathe in it," came the instruction. "You'll find you'll enjoy it."

I went down the steps into delightful water. And here is one of the strangest incidents of the whole "adventure" . . . when I came up from that bath I was no longer conscious that I was nude. On the other hand, neither was I conscious of having donned clothes. The bath did something to me in the way of clothing me. What, I don't know.

But immediately I came up garbed, somehow, by the magic contact of the water, people began coming into the patio, crossing over it and going down the southern steps and off into the inexpressible turquoise. As they passed me, they cast curiously amused glances at me. And everybody nodded and spoke to me. They had a kindness, a courtesy, a friendliness, in their faces and addresses that quite overwhelmed me. Think of all the saintly, attractive, magnetic folk you know, imagine them constituting the whole social world—no misfits, no tense countenances, no sour leers, no preoccupied brusqueness or physical handicap—and the whole environment of life permeated with an ecstatic harmony as universal as air, and you get an idea of my reflexes in those moments. I recall exclaiming to myself:

"How happy everybody seems!—how jolly! Every individual here conveys something that makes me want to know him personally." Then, with a sense of shock, it dawned upon me: "*I have known every one of these people at some time or other, personally, intimately!*" But they are sublimated now—physically glorified—not as I knew them in life at all."

I CANNOT make anyone understand how natural it all seemed that I should be there. After that first presentment of dying—which experience had ended in the most kindly ministration—all terror and strangeness left me and I had never felt more alive. It never occurred to me that I was in "heaven," or, if it did, it occasioned me no more astonishment that I should be there than when, at some period of my mundane consciousness, it had occurred to me that I was on "earth." . . . After all, do we know much more about the one than the other?

I had simply ended a queer voyage

through bluish void and found myself in a charming place among jolly, worthwhile people who saw in me something that amused them to the point of quiet laughter. Yet not a laughter that I could resent. I had no mad obsession to go off at once in search of Deity or look up Abraham Lincoln or Julius Caesar. I was quite content to stroll timidly in the vicinity of the portico by which I had entered this harmonious place and be greeted with pleasant nods by persons whose individualities were uncannily familiar.

They were conventionally garbed, these persons, both men and women. I recall quite plainly that the latter wore hats. I can see with perfect clarity in my mind's eye the outline of the millinery worn by a dignified elderly lady at whose deathbed I had been present in Sioux City, Iowa, in 1923. The big, broad-shouldered, blue-eyed fellow in white duck who had first received me, with his hand beneath the nape of my neck, always hovered in my vicinity, I recall, and kept an eye on my whereabouts and deportment. . . .

I PLEDGE my reputation that I talked with these people, identified many of them, called the others by their wrong names and was corrected, saw and did things that night almost a year ago that it is *verboten* for me to narrate in a magazine article, but which I recall with a minuteness of detail as graphic to me as the keys of my typewriter are now, under my fingers. Regardless of the fact that imagination is the chief asset in one of my vocation, I am not given to particularly graphic dreams. Certainly, we never dream by the process of coming awake first, knowing that we are suffering some kind of heart or head attack, swooning, and coming abruptly conscious again in the arms of two kindly persons who reassure us audibly that everything is quite all right. Nor do the impressions of a dream so stay with us—at least they have never so stayed with me—that after a year such an experience is as vivid as many of my experiences in Siberia during the late World War.

I went somewhere, penetrated to a distinct place, and had an actual, concrete experience. I found myself an existing entity in a locality where persons I had always called "dead" were not dead at all. They were very much alive.

The termination of this journey—my exit so to speak—was as peculiar as my advent.

I was wandering alone about the portico I have described, with most of my recognizable friends gone out of it for the moment, when I was caught in a swirl of bluish vapor that seemed to roll in from nowhere in particular. Instead of plunging prone I was lifted or levitated. Up, up, up I seemed to tumble, *feet first*, despite the ludicrousness of the description. A long, swift, swirling journey of this. And then something clicked—something in my body. The best analogy is the sound my repeating deer-rifle makes when I work the ejector mechanism—a flat, metallic, automatic sensation.

Next, I was sitting up in bed in my physical body again, as wide awake as I am at this moment, staring at the patch of window where the moon was going down, with a reflex of physical exhaustion through my chest, diaphragm, and abdo-





PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED CHENEY, JONESTON, N. Y.

### William Dudley Pelley

men that lasted several moments. Not any digestive distress, you understand; simply a great weariness in my torso as if I had passed through a tremendous physical ordeal and my heart must accelerate to make up the lost energy.

"That wasn't a dream!" I cried aloud. And my voice awoke Laska, who straightened to her haunches.

There was no more slumber for me that night. I lay back finally with the whole experience fresh in my senses but an awful lamentation in my heart that I was forced to come back at all—back into a world of struggle and disappointment, turmoil and misinterpretation, to an existence of bill

collectors, unfriendly bankers, capricious editors, and caustic critics—to all the mental and physical aches and pains which combine with the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune to make of this Earth Plane a Vale of Tears.

It was tragedy, the coming back.

Call it the Hereafter, call it Heaven, call it Purgatory, call it the Astral Plane, call it the Fourth Dimension, call it What You Will. Whatever it is—and where—that human entities go after being released from physical limitations, I had gone there that night. And, like Lazarus of old, I had been called back—back to the anguish (in comparison) of physi-

cal existence to finish out my time in the conventional manner. Up to the moment of writing this article almost a year later, I have had not the slightest indication toward a repetition of the episode. Dreams I have had, and occasionally a fine, old-fashioned nightmare, but I have known them for such. Somehow or other, in sleep that night, I unhooked something in the strange mechanism that is Spirit in Matter, and for from seven to ten minutes my own conscious entity that is Bill Pelley, writing-man, slipped over to the Other Side.

*There is a survival of human entity after death of the body, (Continued on page 139)*



operate an efficient and regular service. "Flying is really safe, when the proper safeguards are taken. Isn't that true of almost anything else?"

"As for speed, the contrast between flying and any other means of transportation is incredible. It takes twenty hours to go to Chicago from New York by fast train; by plane it is possible to travel that distance in nine hours. Indeed, the new models of high-powered commercial ships will be able to do it in six hours. That's why business men travel more frequently by plane nowadays; why national organizations are buying planes to transport goods to all corners of the country. Time is what we try to save more than anything else.

"And you should have been here last Sunday. We took up more than five hundred passengers. Some whole families—father, mother, and children—went up together. Then they would ask if they might be allowed to line up beside the plane and have their picture taken. I suppose they're mighty proud of those pictures now. But in ten years flying will be an old story with a good many of these folks."

AS THE GREAT WAR recedes and becomes history, more and more facts about the part that America played in it come to light. Next month, in "How We Kept Tabs on the German Army," you will learn about the inside workings of our Secret Service during the stupendous conflict. A fascinating article with all the lure of a detective or mystery story!

## Seven Minutes in Eternity

(Continued from page 9)

for I have seen and talked intelligently with friends whom I had looked down upon as cold wax in caskets.

But that is not all. There is plenty of aftermath. To describe the effects of the experience, however, it is necessary to intrude a few personal confidences, none of which I am eager to make.

I brought something back with me from that Ecstatic Interlude—something that had interpenetrated my physical self and which suddenly began to function in strange powers of perception.

I was born the only son of an itinerant Methodist preacher. Soon after my birth my parents began that old-fashioned Odyssey of traveling from "call" to "call" in the northern Massachusetts back hills.

Orthodox Protestant theology, as it was forty years ago, was far more plentiful in my father's household than bread, butter, clothes, and fuel. Camp meetings and quarterly conferences, the higher criticism, predestination, free will and election, infant damnation, hell fire, and the day of judgment constituted the household converse in my young and "tender" years. God early shaped up to me as a weird combination of heavenly Moloch and sublimated Overseer of the Poor.

Parish poverty forced my father from the ministry, but with grim New England

# A woman solves a problem that has burdened millions of people

"HAVE you ever lain awake night after night, half awake and half asleep, listening to the clock tick away the age-long hours? Then, in the morning, have you dragged yourself from your bed and forced yourself, a big bundle of nerves, to move through another exhausting day?"

"That's what I did for five months and I don't exaggerate when I say another three months of it would have driven me insane. Fortunately, about this time, a friend suggested Postum with my meals, in place of caffeine.

"That was four weeks ago. Now I sleep from the moment I hit the pillow; I eat heartily; I haven't been cross for days; I'm 100% happier. Even my casual acquaintances have noticed the change!"

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rigor he saw to it that his relinquishment of a pulpit did not lessen my surfeit of conventional theology. Three times to church on the Sabbath day and twice during the week—Tuesday evening class meeting and Thursday evening prayer meeting—left me small opportunity to forget my Maker and the gratitude I owed Him. Just what this gratitude was owed Him for troubled my small soul exceedingly in those far-off years, because I found myself created a perpetually hungry, shabbily dressed, and none-too-happy youngster who had to start his life labor at fourteen years of age and stay with it thereafter, even to the present.

**I**N THE years between fourteen and twenty-two I became a smoldering young Bolshevik against every kind of authority—particularly against religious authority which had apparently sanctioned these injustices against me—and by picking up the rudiments of a denied education through promiscuous reading, I went far afield from accredited Christianity.

No need to clutter up this article with a list of the books I read, but at twenty-two, in a little town in northern New York, I was publishing a brochure magazine of heretical leanings. I had discovered myself possessed of a certain facility with iconoclastic language, and the courage of my ignorance. Fresh from a wry, lonely, misunderstood childhood, cluttered up psychologically with the worst sort of New England inhibitions, revengeful that I had been denied social and academic advantages for which my hunger was instinctive, I proceeded to play a lone hand and make things hot for several godly people whose only indictment was that they represented Authority as aforesaid—and especially spiritual.

On maturer perspective I see that I should have been spanked—or educated—but all the theological misfits in forty-eight states and a couple of foreign countries were soon buying my magazine, and my twaddle was piling up to give me much heartache later when I came to see that I took out on God what I should have taken out on an inhibited environment.

The Almighty stood the onslaught pretty well, however. I got into newspaper work, and marriage, and fatherhood, and more poverty, and that was the last of the heretical magazine, though not of its owner's theological complexes. I shopped around in my religions. I read still queerer books. And inevitably the day came when immature intelligence couldn't stand this food and instead of digesting it, I ejected it *à la mal de mer*. . . . For ten years I was one of the worst agnostics that ever had books come to his post-office box in plain wrappers from freak publishing houses.

I had brains enough to see that my life had been started all wrong and was "getting no better fast," but had not the academic or social equipment to alter existence and start myself about-face.

Those were cruel, cruel years—looking back on them now. A couple of my business projects went to whack. So did my marriage. With each additional snarl I got more and more vindictive. The death of my first daughter mellowed me somewhat for a time. I wrote a couple of novels in which love of human nature was largely a reflex from the fearful storm of

hatred and despair that was waging inside me. I knew my life was a ghastly mess, that I was cynical and caustic, that the so-called "friends" whom I could trust could be counted on the fingers of one hand—and most of those would stand watching—that we got nothing in this world unless we fought for it with the ferocity of a Siberian wolf-dog and that without a doubt *Death ended everything*.

America's entry into the World War found me in the Orient, not at all a healthy place for one striving to escape the biological premise for human existence. I went with the Japanese forces to Siberia, acted as Red Triangle man, consular courier, and war correspondent through the Bolshevik-Czech campaign, and came back to the United States to face a newspaper business in ruins. The swarming millions of Asia had not confirmed my faith in the conventional Almighty's goodness and wisdom—had made me only more skeptical, in fact—though I never had anything but remorseful tenderness in my heart for the memory of the Man of Sorrows and what He epitomized in the human scheme of things.

To save my newspaper creditors from loss, I went to Hollywood and labored among the *Flesh Pots*. I made a score of motion pictures, most of them flops because I had a most uncanny facility for roiling the very persons whom I should have made my friends. I wrote a couple of books which my publishers refused. I fought with them in consequence, still taking life by strong-arm methods. I wrote many stories that editors rejected. I fought with them too.

When an editor wouldn't buy a certain story I sat down to my typewriter and contrived to tell him that I thought him an ass. I even told the editor of *THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE* that he was an ass—in spite of which he showed his caliber by taking my opinion as painlessly as possible and going right along buying and publishing my better submissions. That hurt worse than if he had fought with me. You see, I had the unfortunate complex that the attainment of success meant a knock-down-and-drag-out scrap. It made me a lone wolf at life, getting the least bit mangy as I reached my forties.

Time after time I tried sincerely to correct my psychology and get back certain religious (not theological) cues I felt I had lost with the passing of boyhood. I plunged deeper than ever into eleven-pound volumes on all sorts of race traits and behaviorism. I was a walking exposition of how a man may reach middle life and be the worst internal mess that ever got into "Who's Who." . . .

**I**N VIEW of such an autobiographical summary, can you see the significance of my nocturnal experience?

I went about my bungalow in the days that followed as if I were still in a sort of trance—which verily I was. Days of this, with a queer unrest galvanizing me, a feeling that I was on the verge of something, that out of my weird Self-Projection onto another plane of existence I had brought something that was working within me like yeast.

Then came experience number two—not quite so theatric and therefore harder to describe.

One night while still imbued with the



"feeling" of my fourth dimensional adventure, I took down a volume of Emerson and opened it by chance at his essay on the Over-Soul. In the middle of it, though not reading any specific line, epigram, paragraph, or page, I had a queer moment of confusion, a sort of cerebral vertigo, then a strange physical sensation at the very top of my head as if a beam of pure white light had poured down from above and bored a shaft straight into my skull. In that instant a vast weight went out of my whole physical ensemble. A veil was torn away.

I saw no "vision," but something had happened and was continuing to happen. A cascade of pure, cool, wonderful peace was falling down from somewhere above me and cleansing me. My book fell from my fingers to the rug and stayed there. I sat there staring into space.

*I was not the same man I had been a moment before!*

I mean this physically, mentally, spiritually. I knew that somehow I had acquired senses and perceptions that I could never hope to describe to any second person, and yet they were as real to me as the shape of my wrists. For a time I wondered if "much learning had driven me mad," but then I recalled that really mad people never question whether or not they're mad. Next, I was aware of something new and strange and different from anything in my whole experience—

There was someone in that darkening room with me besides Laska, my dog. In fact, I was aware that several living, vibrant personalities were with me in that room. Laska sat up, cocked her head from side to side, and wagged her tail at some of them—at *nothing*—apparently—one of them, in particular, standing by my desk at the north end of the room. And yet I was not in the slightest afraid. Why be afraid of our friends? . . .

IN ALL of my life up to that time I had never seen a ghost, never had more than an academic interest in psychic phenomena. I had not invited any of these experiences that I knew of. They had simply come to me.

What really had happened was, *I had unlocked hidden powers within myself that I know every human being possesses, and had augmented my five physical senses with other senses just as bona fide, legitimate, and natural as touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing.* That I had help in unlocking those hidden powers I do not deny. Nevertheless, nothing had happened to me that has not happened to hundreds of other people, but only very rarely do they talk about it.

What those hidden powers are, and why I maintain that they are *bona fide*, legitimate, and natural I shall have to leave. But they had suddenly shown me that life is not at the ordinary, humdrum, three-meals-a-day thing that I had always accepted. Its essence or its meaning is so vast and fine and high and beautiful that it overwhelmed me, and a recognition of it performed a sort of *re-creation* in me that made me feel I was actually *not* the same fellow I had been just before.

My desire to explain what I mean by this is almost an ache within me at this moment. But, for some uncanny reason, words are not the medium to convey it. Thought doesn't convey it. Feeling



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doesn't convey it. The "me" that is the Bill-Pelley identity can convey it only by *being*, and the fact that I *am* gets it to you.

Is that last a nonsensical statement? Well, I hope I'm not cracked. All I can say is, that I *know* by experience that there is a great, overpowering existence outside of what we call Life—that I have been in it and *felt* it—that having been in it has endowed me with certain capacities that have transformed my whole concept of the universe and, some of my friends are kind enough to add, have transformed me—physically as well as mentally and spiritually.

**M**Y FIRST dramatic physical reaction was a sudden change in the components of my body. I discovered that miraculously I had lost my "nerves."

Ever since childhood I had lived under such a tremendous nervous tension that it had kept me under weight, put lines in my face and an edge on my voice, shattered me psychologically so that opposition of any kind infuriated me and made me want to crash through it like an army tank flattening out a breastworks. Attacks of nervous indigestion were so common that I no longer gave them thought.

Suddenly all this had departed.

I was peaceful inside.

And the change soon began to manifest itself in concrete form. One day in my office I took a package of cigarettes from my desk. About to apply a light to one of them, I heard a voice say as gently as any worried mother might caution a careless son, "Oh, Bill, give up your cigarettes!" And even before it had occurred to me that no one was present in the flesh to address me thus audibly, I answered: "All right!" and tossed the package into the near-by wastebasket. I went all that day without smoking. Next morning, again, I reached for my tobacco tin across on my desk to load up my cornucop. *It was knocked from my hands with a slap that tossed it upward in the air and deposited it bottom upward at my feet with the tobacco spilled out.* No cautioning this time. But I knew!

I haven't smoked tobacco in any form from that day to the present—this after twenty years of smoking a dozen cigars a day, lighting one from the butt of the other. Moreover, I haven't had the slightest ill effect nor did I go through the agonizing torture of "breaking off." I just didn't smoke any more—didn't have the nervous urge—didn't even give tobacco a thought.

The same strange prohibition seemed to shut down on coffee, tea, alcohol, and meats. I endured not the slightest distress in giving these items up. They simply ceased to exist for me. And, inversely, a strange new sensation began to manifest itself in my muscles and organs.

I had the glorious feeling of physical detachment from the handicaps of bodily matter. No form of bodily exercise seemed to take energy that I had consciously to supply. I had always been slightly stooped-shouldered. Without any unusual exercise, my spine straightened of itself, so to speak.

Along with this physical phenomenon went the unexplainable faculty of withstanding fatigue. If I wearied myself by prolonged physical labor, it was the healthy weariness of boyhood that over-

took me, and a sound night's sleep wrought complete readjustment. On the other hand, I found I could sit at my typewriter twelve hours at a stretch, if necessary, with hardly a muscle protesting. I had suffered consistently from insomnia ever since a period in my twenties when I worked as police reporter on a morning newspaper. Now I went to bed and to sleep.

With this physical alteration came a different feeling toward those around me. This perhaps was the most astounding aftermath of the whole adventure. Certainly it appeared to have convinced my friends that some extraordinary thing had occurred, since it dramatized my rejuvenation, so to speak, and gave them something to perceive with their senses.

I discovered, for instance, that I couldn't show any more nervous bellicosity to those with whom I came daily in contact. I recall specifically that just before my strange experience I had made an unfortunate investment in a chain of western restaurants. I was striving to withdraw with minimum loss. Local banks and bankers had refused to come to my assistance in order to lubricate the situation and help hold the proposition together till a purchaser more competent in the food business than myself should be procured. I submit that I had every chance to be incensed at them for not assisting me, for my bank account had run into thousands upon thousands of dollars and the conventional banking advice and aid at the right moment would have made the whole commercial ordeal only a passing incident.

**S**IX months before I would have been so fighting mad that my hatred of this sort of treatment and my loathing of "bloated capitalists who showed themselves only fair-weather friends" would have made me physically ill. In fact, I formerly prided myself on being a good hater. But somehow, worried though I was, I hadn't the slightest ill will toward these banking people, and I went ahead and pulled my proposition out of the hole without their financial aid.

And, inversely, when the situation came to the surface and others heard of the fight I was making, I was overwhelmed by their manifestations of good will and their practical assistance. For the first time in my experience people were going out of their way to perform services for me, to counsel me, to seek my society, to make me and my problems one with themselves—yes, even to offer me unsolicited loans. I think this amazed me more than the strangeness of my physical rebirth. At first I thought it might have something to do with a resentment those persons held toward the bankers who had abandoned me just the moment a cloud showed on my horizon. I thought they might be acting in a sort of sympathy and nursing their own barked knuckles. *Then I became aware that some of them hadn't heard of my predicament, and that startled me.* What on earth had gotten into folks that they were so interested in me and my activities?

I came through to New York some weeks later to mend literary fences and renew some sagging editorial acquaintances. I was not at all prepared for the attention I got. It had never happened to



me before. I was utterly at a loss. I discovered that some sort of invisible wall between me and the rest of the world had been razed.

It is embarrassing to dilate on this state of affairs and the altered social relations maintaining now with friends who were formerly only acquaintances.

And yet—deep down underneath it all—from the very first I have had instinctive understanding. And that understanding has been growing in clarity every day and hour since that epochal night in the bungalow.

I must concede that it increasingly comprises many factors and revelations which I am constrained from reporting. Still, there are conclusions and equations I may draw that have a universality of application.

**WHAT** is this thing which happened to me, and why did it happen?

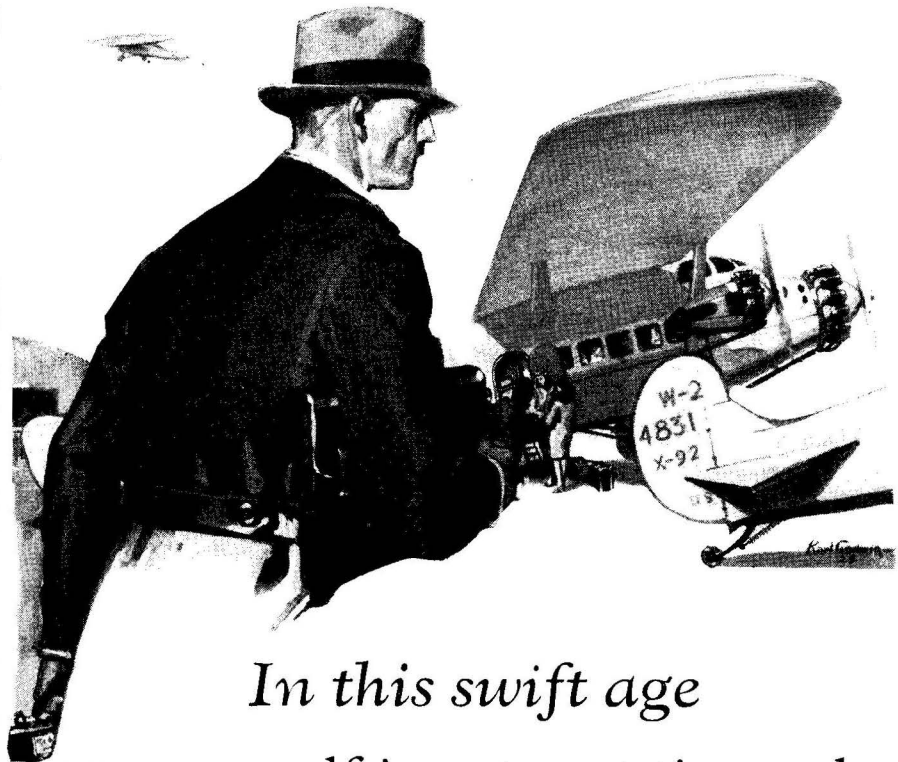
First, I believe my subconscious hunger after what the Bible terms "the things of the Spirit"—that is, the sincere desire to penetrate behind the mediocrity of three-meals-a-day living and ascertain what mystery lies behind this Golgotha of Existence—attracted to me spiritual forces of a very high and altruistic order, who aided me in making a hyperdimensional visitation. I believe such hunger will always attract such forces.

Second, it goes without saying that having made such a visitation and having had certain questions concretely answered by those I confronted in that dimension, my subconscious (or for that matter conscious) knowledge of what the Fourth Dimension is, and means, and what can be done within its area, undertook to operate first upon my physical body and to bring about the rejuvenation which subsequently came to me. And yet I can no more explain the Fourth Dimension with *words* than I can convey to a man blind from birth the redness of the color red. I know what it is myself, as I know what redness is. I can see how it interpenetrates Matter, constituting the "inside" of it, so to speak, and how projections from it must come out the reverse of what we know them on the physical plane. But I can no more make it intelligible to the average reader than Einstein can explain Relativity to a group of men in a smoking car, all of them unfamiliar with advanced mathematics.

Third, these experiences immediately revealed to me that there is a world of subliminal or spiritual existence, interpenetrating the ordinary world in which most of us exist as ordinary two-legged Americans full of aches and worries, and that *this subliminal world is the real world*—the world of "stern reality" if you will; that it is waiting for the race to learn of it and "tap" its beneficent resources, without waiting for what we call physical death; that our "dead" dear ones are existent in it—alive, happy, conscious, and waiting for us to join them, either at death or any time we reach that stage of spirituality where we can make contact with them.

I have seen my own there and have visited with them!

Understand thoroughly—I am not a Spiritualist, an Occultist, or a Psychic Researcher in the ordinary meaning of those terms. I am not trying to convert



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anyone to anything. I'm simply telling you that something happened to me which was not consciously self-invited; that my friends attest to an even greater alteration's having taken place in my personality than I am capable of feeling from within.

**T**HERE is in every human heart a hunger and thirst for the things of the spirit, but in many of them this desire has been so embalmed with the poisons of worry, doubt, fleshly desire, struggle to attain the wherewithal for physical survival, that for all practical purposes it no longer exists.

But the day is coming in the evolution of the race when spirituality is going to be the whole essence of life, instead of the world's present materialism. Here and there have always been those who, by their unusual visions, self-invited or otherwise, might be called monitors for the rest of us—showing us what we all may attain if we so order our lives and thinking as to be susceptible to such revelations.

I believe that Nature—God—Universal Spirit—give the Great Cause any name you will—is taking this method of conferring unusual experiences upon these "monitors," to give the whole race an inspiration by which it may quicken its spiritual pace. There is nothing any more prohibitive, morally or ethically, to ex-

ploration of these new great Fields of Real Reality than to exploration of the fields of radio or atomic energy. In fact, the Great Cause *intends* that we shall explore them.

At any rate, whether I am right or wrong, I know that for a limited time one night last year out in California my spiritual entity left my body and went somewhere—a concrete place where I could talk, walk about, feel, and see; where answers were returned to questions addressed to physically dead people, which have checked up in the waking world and clarified for me the riddle of earthly existence.

I know there is no Death because, in a manner of speaking, I went through the process of dying, came back into my body and took up the burden of earthly living again. I know that the experience has metamorphosed the cantankerous Vermont Yankee that was once Bill Pelley, and launched him into a wholly different universe that seems filled with naught but love, harmony, health, good humor, and prosperity.

What's the answer to that?

There is no answer, except that it must be accepted as inevitably as I am forced to accept the awareness of my own entity. I *know* because I *experienced*.

Further deponent sayeth not!

**DO YOU KNOW HOW** to apply for a job? Can you write a letter of application that will get results? Do you know how to make the best of yourself if an interview is granted? These and many other questions pertinent to the always interesting subject of getting a job are covered next month in an article by Albert Edward Wiggam. Every year more than one million young folks are ready to make their first venture in self-support. Here's something to help them; here's something, too, to help the older folks who are looking for bigger chances.

## Can You Say "No"?

(Continued from page 57)

following week another alumnus recommended me to the secretary of the Merchants' Association, and with that my career as a bright and promising New Yorker was started.

"I looked over the city carefully before choosing my apartment, and selected a part of town inhabited by the rich and influential. I attended a successful church, and put my name up for membership in the University Club. At election time I got out and worked. I spoke from soap boxes (there is always a dearth of speakers) and rang doorbells. I started at the bottom of the organization and did the dirty work; and when I had served three years I thought I was entitled to recognition, so I braced the district leader for the nomination to the Assembly, and he let me have it."

He paused and looked at me quizzically.

"I suppose that when you write interviews with successful men they are not usually as frank as this," he said.

"Not often," I answered. "They don't usually take the public quite so far behind the scenes, or show quite as much of the machinery."

"I don't want you to think that I was a bluffer or merely a self-advertiser, or a snob," he said earnestly. "I did go out deliberately to make the right sort of

friends, and I did beat the tom-tom in front of my tent whenever occasion offered. But I worked. Lord, how I worked those first ten years! And the work had its reward. At forty I was a partner in a first-class firm. I had a beautiful wife and two splendid children, a house in the country and a house in town. I was an ex-member of the State Senate, entitled to be addressed as 'Senator' the rest of my life. And I was a well-known figure in New York. Who could possibly ask for more? Where was the weak spot in my situation? How could such a nice jar of ointment possibly hold a fly?"

"That's exactly what I'd like to know," I said. "You seemed to have everything in the world, and suddenly you up and left. Where *was* the fly?"

**H**E WAS silent for several minutes, pulling hard on his cigar. Then he got up and walked over to the bookcase and took down a big book. He laid it out on the table, and I saw it was a sort of combination diary and scrapbook—big pages, filled with notes, typewritten memoranda, invitations, programs, and so on.

"The fly was just this," he said: "I had started something that I couldn't stop. I was like that fellow who built a monster out of bones and so forth from a church-